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# 2012-2013 Illinois Otter Trapper Report



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# 2012-2013 ILLINOIS OTTER TRAPPER REPORT

## JOB COMPLETION REPORT

### WILDLIFE HARVEST AND HUMAN DIMENSIONS RESEARCH PROGRAM

#### STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NUMBER: W-112-R-22

STUDY 101

JOB NO.101.2

(Supplemental Report)

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Illinois Natural History Survey

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Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration

W-112-R-22

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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## **ABSTRACT**

Illinois otter trapping was reinstated for the 2012-2013 trapping season; all 817 persons who received a 2012-2013 resident Illinois otter registration permit were mailed a 4-page questionnaire, and we received 641 (79%) questionnaires. Trappers set an average of 29 traps for an average of 38 days or nights during the 2012-2013 season. They harvested an average of 2.46 otters (*Lontra canadensis*) each, totaling 1,506 otters. Participants also harvested 27,544 raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), 9,851 muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), and 6,126 beaver (*Castor canadensis*) during the 2012-2013 Illinois trapping season. Sightings of bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) by trappers and trapper attitudes were also documented.

## **OBJECTIVE**

To survey otter permit holders to determine their activities, harvests, characteristics, and opinions in Illinois.

## **METHODS**

All 817 persons who received a resident Illinois otter trapping permit (2012-2013) were selected from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) license sales database. Each trapper was mailed a 4-page questionnaire (Appendix A), cover letter (Appendix B), and a postage-paid return envelope on 14 May 2013. Nonrespondents were mailed a thank you/reminder postcard (Appendix C) on 30 May 2013. Remaining nonrespondents were mailed a second questionnaire and cover letter (Appendix D) on 18 June 2013. Trappers who did not respond to the previous mailings were mailed a second thank you/reminder postcard on 5 July

2013. The initial sample of 817 licenses was reduced to 813 due to undeliverable addresses.

Season date information can be located in Appendix E.

## RESULTS

A total of 641 (79%) license purchasers responded to the survey. Of these, 639 were considered usable samples.

### *Otter Trapper Participation*

Of the 639 respondents, 40.0% indicated they trapped one otter; another 20.5% responded they trapped 2 otters, followed by 18.9% who indicated they trapped 5 (Table 1). Participants were asked to indicate whether the otters harvested were trapped in a targeted otter trap or a trap that was targeted for a different species. A majority of participants (67%) indicated they trapped 1 or 2 otters in targeted otter traps (Table 2). Of those who indicated they caught otters as a secondary target, 73.2% of surveyed trappers ( $n=138$ ) indicated they caught 1 otter in a targeted raccoon trap and 60.5% ( $n=281$ ) indicated they caught 1 otter in a targeted beaver trap (Tables 3-4).

Within each watershed (Appendix F) more male otters were trapped than female otters (Table 5). The Mississippi watershed showed the highest incidence of otter harvest throughout the state (311 otters); the Kaskaskia and Illinois watersheds followed with 221 and 157 otters, respectively. A graphical representation of the number of otters trapped in each watershed is shown in Figure 1.

Approximately one third of participants (34.7%) indicated they were “Moderately Satisfied” with the length of time it took to receive their CITES tag (Table 6). Another 21.9% indicated they were “Very Satisfied,” and 19.0% indicated they were “Not at all Satisfied.”

Active trappers set an average of 29 traps for an average of 38 days or nights (Tables 7-8). The maximum number of days a trapper could have trapped was 147; 44% set traps for > 30 days and 26% of trappers set traps for > 50 days.

### ***Harvest***

Trappers reported trapping, in order of frequency, raccoons (27,544) followed by muskrat (9,851) and beaver (6,126) (Table 9). Otters were the sixth most trapped furbearer with a total of 1,506 trapped in Illinois. Nearly 50% of otter pelts were sold in Illinois (46%), while approximately 35% were sold or shipped out of state and 19% were not sold at all. Surveyed trappers most frequently set traps in Adams and Pike counties ( $n=24$  each) followed by Fayette and Jo Daviess counties ( $n=18$  each) during the 2012-2013 trapping season (Table 10).

### ***Observation of Wildlife***

Bobcats (*Lynx rufus*) or their sign were reported by 260 trappers in 67 counties and 312 trappers in 73 counties, respectively (Tables 11-14).

### ***Attitudes Toward Trapping***

To understand trapper attitudes about trapping, participants were given a series of statements involving trapping and were asked to indicate whether they agree or disagree with the statement (Table 16). A majority of respondents (77%) indicated they “Slightly Agree,” “Agree,”

or “Strongly Agree” that “Trapping is one of the most important activities in [their] life.”

Similarly, trappers also indicated “I spend a lot of time in the off-season planning for trapping season” by selecting “Slightly Agree,” “Agree,” or “Strongly Agree” (72%). One half of participants (52.4%) indicated they “Agree” that “Trapping provides a source of income.” The most frequent response to the statement “I plan vacation time around trapping season” was “Disagree” followed closely by “Strongly Agree” (21.7% and 21.2%, respectively). Over 80% of surveyed trappers “Slightly Agree,” “Agree,” or “Strongly Agree” with the statement “Trapping gives me a sense of independence” (81%). Following the trend of agreement, trappers indicated “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” to each of the following statements: “Sharing trapping traditions with others is important” (75%), “Trapping is an important part of my lifestyle” (64%), “Trapping is a test of outdoor skill and knowledge” (84%). Respondents most frequently indicated “Slightly Agree” “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” to “My closest friends are trappers” (62%). More than half of the trappers who participated (52%) indicated “Slightly Agree” or “Agree” to the statement “I spend a lot of time before the season scouting the area I will trap.”

The most frequent response to “I enjoy introducing new people to trapping” was “Agree” (30.6%) followed by “Strongly Agree” (26.6%). Approximately 30% of trapper participants indicated “Agree” (29.2%) and “Strongly Agree” (28.7%) to the statement “Interacting with other trappers is an important part of trapping.” Over 90% of participants (91%) “Slightly Agree,” “Agree,” or “Strongly Agree” with the statement “I trap for the challenge it provides.” A majority of participants (58.4%) “Strongly Agree” that “Trapping is an important tradition.”

Trappers indicated “Slightly Agree” most often (22.8%) when given the statement “I trap for the extra income it provides.” More than half of participants (63%) responded “Agree” or “Strongly



Agree” to the statement “Trapping maintains family traditions”; similarly, trappers “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” (59%) that they trap “To be self-reliant.”

### ***General Information***

During the 2012-2013 season, Illinois trappers averaged 48 years of age and had been trapping for an average of 23 years (Tables 17-18); 11.2% of the trappers indicated that the 2012-13 trapping season was the first season they have ever trapped in Illinois, and 15.3% said it was not their first year trapping in Illinois, but they had not trapped in more than a year (Table 19). Nearly 40% of surveyed trappers indicated they returned to trapping because it was now legal to trap otters (Table 20). A vast majority of respondents were male (97.5%), and 55.8% of respondents indicated that they trap every year (Tables 21-22). Trapper distribution by county of residence can be found in (Table 23).

Table 1. Number of otters captured in Illinois for the 2012-2013 trapping season.

| # of Otters | % Trappers |
|-------------|------------|
| 1           | 40.0       |
| 2           | 20.5       |
| 3           | 11.4       |
| 4           | 9.1        |
| 5           | 18.9       |

Table 1a. Number of otters captured in Illinois for the 2012-2013 trapping season by trap target.

| Trap Target                                    | # of Otters |
|--|-------------|
| Targeted otter trap                            | 674         |
| Targeted raccoon trap with otters as secondary | 190         |
| Targeted beaver trap with otters as secondary  | 475         |

Table 2. Number of otters trapped in a targeted otter trap ( $n=309$ ).

| # of Otters | % Trappers |
|-------------|------------|
| 1           | 43.4       |
| 2           | 23.6       |
| 3           | 14.2       |
| 4           | 9.1        |
| 5           | 9.7        |

Table 3. Number of otters trapped in a targeted raccoon trap with otters as a secondary target ( $n=138$ ).

| # of Otters | % Trappers |
|-------------|------------|
| 1           | 73.2       |
| 2           | 19.6       |
| 3           | 4.3        |
| 4           | 2.2        |
| 5           | 0.7        |

Table 4. Number of otters trapped in a targeted beaver trap with otters as a secondary target ( $n=281$ ).

| # of Otters | % Trappers |
|-------------|------------|
| 1           | 60.5       |
| 2           | 21.0       |
| 3           | 10.7       |
| 4           | 4.6        |
| 5           | 3.2        |

Table 5. Distribution of male and female otters trapped in each watershed.

| Watershed                  | Male Otters | Female Otters |
|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Mississippi                | 209         | 102           |
| Kaskaskia                  | 141         | 80            |
| Illinois                   | 109         | 48            |
| La Moine                   | 70          | 38            |
| Big Muddy                  | 68          | 23            |
| Little Wabash              | 54          | 27            |
| Spoon                      | 43          | 26            |
| Rock                       | 40          | 20            |
| Lower Cache                | 31          | 14            |
| Embarras                   | 27          | 8             |
| Wabash                     | 26          | 27            |
| Vermilion (Wabash Basin)   | 23          | 11            |
| Upper Cache                | 21          | 11            |
| Sangamon                   | 18          | 15            |
| Macoupin                   | 14          | 8             |
| Saline                     | 14          | 8             |
| Mackinaw                   | 12          | 10            |
| Ohio                       | 12          | 4             |
| Iroquois                   | 9           | 3             |
| Green                      | 6           | 2             |
| Kishwaukee                 | 4           | 1             |
| Fox                        | 2           | 1             |
| Vermilion (Illinois Basin) | 0           | 6             |
| Des Plaines                | 0           | 1             |
| Chicago                    | 0           | 0             |
| Kankakee                   | 0           | 0             |

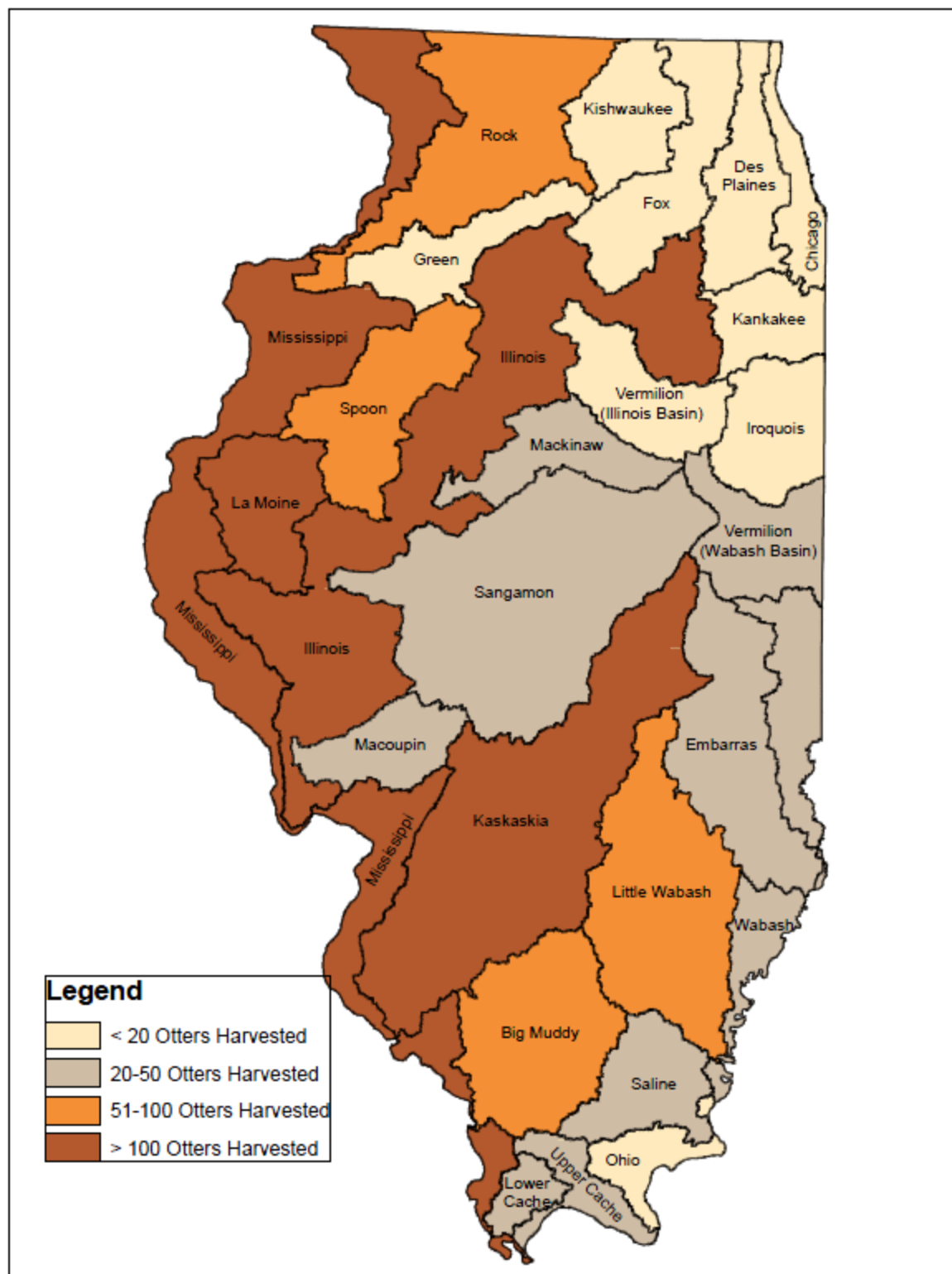


Figure 1. Number of otters trapped in each watershed in Illinois for the 2012-2013 trapping season.

Table 6. Respondent satisfaction with the length of time it took to receive their CITES tag.

|   | Not at all<br>Satisfied | Slightly<br>Satisfied | Moderately<br>Satisfied | Very<br>Satisfied | Extremely<br>Satisfied |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| % | 19.0                    | 15.7                  | 34.7                    | 21.9              | 8.6                    |

Table 7. Average number of traps set on traplines during the 2012-2013 trapping season.

| Range-Traps Set           | % Trappers |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 1-10                      | 25.7       |
| 11-20                     | 29.6       |
| 21-30                     | 16.9       |
| 31-40                     | 9.5        |
| 41-50                     | 7.0        |
| 51-100                    | 8.6        |
| >100                      | 2.7        |
| Average traps set = 28.88 |            |

Table 8. Number of days or nights trappers set traps during the 2012-2013 trapping season.

| Total Days/Nights           | % Trappers |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1-10                        | 14.4%      |
| 11-20                       | 19.9%      |
| 21-30                       | 21.5%      |
| 31-40                       | 8.9%       |
| 41-50                       | 9.1%       |
| 51-75                       | 16.4%      |
| 76-100                      | 6.9%       |
| >100                        | 2.9%       |
| Average days/nights = 37.69 |            |

Table 9. Participation and harvest by otter trappers during the 2012-2013 trapping season.

| Species       | Number Trapped | Number Sold in Illinois | Number Sold or Shipped Out of State | Number Not Sold |
|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Muskrat       | 9851           | 5335                    | 4045                                | 471             |
| Mink          | 838            | 391                     | 398                                 | 49              |
| Otter         | 1506           | 688                     | 535                                 | 283             |
| Raccoons      | 27544          | 14235                   | 12448                               | 861             |
| Opossum       | 4748           | 1129                    | 1000                                | 2619            |
| Red Fox       | 248            | 124                     | 96                                  | 28              |
| Gray Fox      | 23             | 18                      | 3                                   | 2               |
| Beaver        | 6126           | 3040                    | 2641                                | 445             |
| Striped Skunk | 761            | 121                     | 129                                 | 511             |
| Weasel        | 17             | 2                       | 2                                   | 13              |
| Coyote        | 2010           | 896                     | 840                                 | 274             |
| Badger        | 15             | 4                       | 6                                   | 5               |

Table 10. Distribution of active trappers by county trapped most in Illinois based on responses to the 2012-2013 Illinois Otter Trapper Survey ( $n=627$ ).

| County     | <i>n</i> | County     | <i>n</i> | County      | <i>n</i> |
|------------|----------|------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Adams      | 24       | Hardin     | 3        | Morgan      | 4        |
| Alexander  | 6        | Henderson  | 8        | Moultrie    | 6        |
| Bond       | 8        | Henry      | 9        | Ogle        | 5        |
| Boone      | 1        | Iroquois   | 8        | Peoria      | 3        |
| Brown      | 7        | Jackson    | 14       | Perry       | 8        |
| Bureau     | 5        | Jasper     | 12       | Piatt       | 1        |
| Calhoun    | 8        | Jefferson  | 7        | Pike        | 24       |
| Carroll    | 15       | Jersey     | 7        | Pope        | 3        |
| Cass       | 7        | Jo Daviess | 18       | Pulaski     | 10       |
| Champaign  | 4        | Johnson    | 9        | Putnam      | 4        |
| Christian  | 5        | Kane       | 0        | Randolph    | 11       |
| Clark      | 0        | Kankakee   | 1        | Richland    | 4        |
| Clay       | 9        | Kendall    | 0        | Rock Island | 5        |
| Clinton    | 10       | Knox       | 12       | St. Clair   | 10       |
| Coles      | 2        | Lake       | 1        | Saline      | 4        |
| Cook       | 0        | LaSalle    | 2        | Sangamon    | 2        |
| Crawford   | 5        | Lawrence   | 9        | Schuyler    | 3        |
| Cumberland | 5        | Lee        | 2        | Scott       | 2        |
| De Kalb    | 2        | Livingston | 1        | Shelby      | 6        |
| DeWitt     | 2        | Logan      | 0        | Stark       | 0        |
| Douglas    | 3        | McDonough  | 16       | Stephenson  | 11       |
| Du Page    | 1        | McHenry    | 0        | Tazewell    | 8        |
| Edgar      | 0        | McLean     | 5        | Union       | 9        |
| Edwards    | 6        | Macon      | 3        | Vermilion   | 9        |
| Effingham  | 7        | Macoupin   | 2        | Wabash      | 3        |
| Fayette    | 18       | Madison    | 6        | Warren      | 4        |
| Ford       | 5        | Marion     | 7        | Washington  | 3        |
| Franklin   | 5        | Marshall   | 2        | Wayne       | 12       |
| Fulton     | 13       | Mason      | 6        | White       | 7        |
| Gallatin   | 6        | Massac     | 7        | Whiteside   | 14       |
| Greene     | 9        | Menard     | 0        | Will        | 0        |
| Grundy     | 1        | Mercer     | 6        | Williamson  | 11       |
| Hamilton   | 1        | Monroe     | 2        | Winnebago   | 6        |
| Hancock    | 17       | Montgomery | 7        | Woodford    | 6        |

Table 11. Incidence of bobcats seen in Illinois during the 2012-2013 trapping season ( $n=630$ ).

|   | Yes  | No   |
|---|------|------|
| % | 41.3 | 58.7 |

Table 12. Illinois counties and frequency in which trappers observed bobcats in Illinois during the 2012-2013 trapping season.

| County     | <i>n</i> | County     | <i>n</i> | County      | <i>n</i> |
|------------|----------|------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Adams      | 17       | Hardin     | 4        | Morgan      | 1        |
| Alexander  | 9        | Henderson  | 2        | Moultrie    | 2        |
| Bond       | 5        | Henry      | 1        | Ogle        | 1        |
| Boone      | 0        | Iroquois   | 0        | Peoria      | 0        |
| Brown      | 9        | Jackson    | 14       | Perry       | 11       |
| Bureau     | 1        | Jasper     | 6        | Piatt       | 0        |
| Calhoun    | 5        | Jefferson  | 4        | Pike        | 25       |
| Carroll    | 2        | Jersey     | 8        | Pope        | 9        |
| Cass       | 1        | Jo Daviess | 6        | Pulaski     | 12       |
| Champaign  | 0        | Johnson    | 9        | Putnam      | 0        |
| Christian  | 1        | Kane       | 0        | Randolph    | 8        |
| Clark      | 1        | Kankakee   | 0        | Richland    | 1        |
| Clay       | 8        | Kendall    | 0        | Rock Island | 3        |
| Clinton    | 10       | Knox       | 0        | St. Clair   | 8        |
| Coles      | 1        | Lake       | 0        | Saline      | 5        |
| Cook       | 0        | LaSalle    | 0        | Sangamon    | 0        |
| Crawford   | 3        | Lawrence   | 6        | Schuyler    | 8        |
| Cumberland | 0        | Lee        | 0        | Scott       | 2        |
| De Kalb    | 0        | Livingston | 0        | Shelby      | 1        |
| DeWitt     | 1        | Logan      | 0        | Stark       | 1        |
| Douglas    | 0        | McDonough  | 4        | Stephenson  | 0        |
| Du Page    | 0        | McHenry    | 0        | Tazewell    | 0        |
| Edgar      | 1        | McLean     | 0        | Union       | 11       |
| Edwards    | 5        | Macon      | 0        | Vermilion   | 1        |
| Effingham  | 4        | Macoupin   | 1        | Wabash      | 4        |
| Fayette    | 8        | Madison    | 1        | Warren      | 0        |
| Ford       | 0        | Marion     | 4        | Washington  | 3        |
| Franklin   | 4        | Marshall   | 0        | Wayne       | 14       |
| Fulton     | 2        | Mason      | 1        | White       | 6        |
| Gallatin   | 5        | Massac     | 7        | Whiteside   | 1        |
| Greene     | 7        | Menard     | 0        | Will        | 0        |
| Grundy     | 0        | Mercer     | 3        | Williamson  | 11       |
| Hamilton   | 3        | Monroe     | 0        | Winnebago   | 0        |
| Hancock    | 7        | Montgomery | 3        | Woodford    | 0        |



Table 13. Incidence of bobcat sign seen in Illinois during the 2012-2013 trapping season ( $n=615$ ).

|   | Yes  | No   |
|---|------|------|
| % | 50.7 | 49.3 |

Table 14. Illinois counties and frequency in which trappers observed **bobcat sign** in Illinois during the 2012-2013 trapping season.

| County     | <i>n</i> | County     | <i>n</i> | County      | <i>n</i> |
|------------|----------|------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Adams      | 23       | Hardin     | 3        | Morgan      | 1        |
| Alexander  | 7        | Henderson  | 2        | Moultrie    | 2        |
| Bond       | 7        | Henry      | 1        | Ogle        | 1        |
| Boone      | 0        | Iroquois   | 0        | Peoria      | 0        |
| Brown      | 9        | Jackson    | 15       | Perry       | 11       |
| Bureau     | 1        | Jasper     | 8        | Piatt       | 0        |
| Calhoun    | 9        | Jefferson  | 8        | Pike        | 24       |
| Carroll    | 4        | Jersey     | 9        | Pope        | 10       |
| Cass       | 3        | Jo Daviess | 10       | Pulaski     | 9        |
| Champaign  | 1        | Johnson    | 9        | Putnam      | 0        |
| Christian  | 1        | Kane       | 0        | Randolph    | 7        |
| Clark      | 1        | Kankakee   | 0        | Richland    | 2        |
| Clay       | 12       | Kendall    | 0        | Rock Island | 2        |
| Clinton    | 14       | Knox       | 4        | St. Clair   | 11       |
| Coles      | 1        | Lake       | 1        | Saline      | 5        |
| Cook       | 0        | LaSalle    | 0        | Sangamon    | 0        |
| Crawford   | 3        | Lawrence   | 8        | Schuyler    | 8        |
| Cumberland | 0        | Lee        | 0        | Scott       | 2        |
| De Kalb    | 0        | Livingston | 0        | Shelby      | 2        |
| DeWitt     | 3        | Logan      | 0        | Stark       | 0        |
| Douglas    | 0        | McDonough  | 6        | Stephenson  | 0        |
| Du Page    | 0        | McHenry    | 0        | Tazewell    | 0        |
| Edgar      | 1        | McLean     | 1        | Union       | 12       |
| Edwards    | 6        | Macon      | 0        | Vermilion   | 1        |
| Effingham  | 5        | Macoupin   | 2        | Wabash      | 4        |
| Fayette    | 13       | Madison    | 3        | Warren      | 0        |
| Ford       | 1        | Marion     | 7        | Washington  | 4        |
| Franklin   | 4        | Marshall   | 1        | Wayne       | 15       |
| Fulton     | 5        | Mason      | 1        | White       | 8        |
| Gallatin   | 6        | Massac     | 9        | Whiteside   | 2        |
| Greene     | 5        | Menard     | 0        | Will        | 0        |
| Grundy     | 0        | Mercer     | 5        | Williamson  | 11       |
| Hamilton   | 1        | Monroe     | 1        | Winnebago   | 0        |
| Hancock    | 11       | Montgomery | 2        | Woodford    | 0        |

Table 15. Participant attitudes toward trapping by respondents to the 2012-2013 Illinois Otter Trapper Survey.

|  | Strongly<br>Disagree<br>% | Disagree<br>% | Slightly<br>Disagree<br>% | Unsure<br>% | Slightly<br>Agree<br>% | Agree<br>% | Strongly<br>Agree<br>% |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| Trapping is one of the most important activities in my life.           | 3.0                       | 8.5           | 4.4                       | 6.6         | 21.1                   | 24.9       | 31.4                   |
| I spend a lot of time in the off-season planning for trapping season.  | 3.0                       | 11.6          | 8.4                       | 4.9         | 28.5                   | 21.6       | 22.0                   |
| Trapping provides me with a source of income.                          | 10.4                      | 18.7          | 10.1                      | 8.4         | 25.3                   | 14.9       | 12.2                   |
| I plan vacation time around trapping season.                           | 13.3                      | 21.7          | 5.3                       | 9.1         | 13.8                   | 15.7       | 21.2                   |
| Trapping gives me a sense of independence.                             | 2.7                       | 5.9           | 2.4                       | 8.6         | 18.1                   | 29.5       | 32.9                   |
| Sharing trapping traditions with others is important.                  | 2.1                       | 2.5           | 1.3                       | 4.3         | 14.5                   | 32.0       | 43.4                   |
| Trapping is an important part of my lifestyle.                         | 2.6                       | 5.3           | 3.3                       | 7.2         | 17.7                   | 26.3       | 37.6                   |
| Trapping is a test of outdoor skill and knowledge.                     | 1.6                       | 1.3           | 0.8                       | 1.6         | 10.5                   | 30.1       | 54.2                   |
| My closest friends are trappers.                                       | 5.8                       | 15.3          | 6.9                       | 10.5        | 24.5                   | 18.4       | 18.7                   |
| I spend a lot of time before the season scouting the area I will trap. | 3.5                       | 12.9          | 6.8                       | 5.9         | 28.9                   | 23.4       | 18.6                   |
| I enjoy introducing new people to trapping.                            | 3.8                       | 5.4           | 3.7                       | 11.8        | 18.0                   | 30.6       | 26.6                   |
| Interacting with other trappers is an important part of trapping.      | 3.0                       | 6.5           | 4.9                       | 8.8         | 18.8                   | 29.2       | 28.7                   |
| I trap for the challenge it provides.                                  | 1.6                       | 3.5           | 1.0                       | 3.5         | 15.1                   | 34.6       | 40.8                   |
| Trapping is an important tradition.                                    | 1.6                       | 2.1           | 0.3                       | 2.1         | 9.4                    | 26.2       | 58.4                   |
| I trap for the extra income it provides.                               | 10.8                      | 17.7          | 9.5                       | 9.8         | 22.8                   | 16.6       | 12.7                   |
| Trapping maintains family traditions.                                  | 4.0                       | 6.3           | 2.4                       | 7.6         | 16.6                   | 29.7       | 33.4                   |
| To be self-reliant   | 2.4                       | 5.2           | 3.8                       | 13.7        | 15.9                   | 30.8       | 28.1                   |

Table 16. Respondents age distribution ( $n=639$ ).

| Range | Average age |
|-------|-------------|
| 13-93 | 47.95       |

Table 17. Number of years spent trapping in Illinois based on participant response to the 2012-2013 Illinois Otter Trapper Survey ( $n=625$ ).

| Years              | % Trappers |
|--------------------|------------|
| 0-10               | 38.6       |
| 11-20              | 12.9       |
| 21-30              | 11.2       |
| 31-40              | 17.5       |
| 41-50              | 12.3       |
| >50                | 7.5        |
| Average = 23 years |            |

Table 18. Incidence of first time trappers or those who have returned to trapping in Illinois.

|   | Yes, I'm a new Illinois resident trapper | No, but I haven't trapped for more than a year | No   |
|---|--|--|------|
| % | 11.2                                     | 15.3   | 73.5 |

Table 19. Trapping trends based on legality of trapping otters.

| Did you begin or return to trapping during the 2012-2013 season because it was now legal to trap otters? |      |      |
|--|------|------|
|  | Yes  | No   |
| %  | 37.0 | 63.0 |

Cases selected for those who are a new Illinois trapper or they haven't trapped for more than a year.

Table 20. Respondent gender distribution.

| Gender | Male | Female |
|--------|------|--------|
| %      | 97.5 | 2.5    |

Table 21. Participant frequency of trapping furbearers in Illinois.

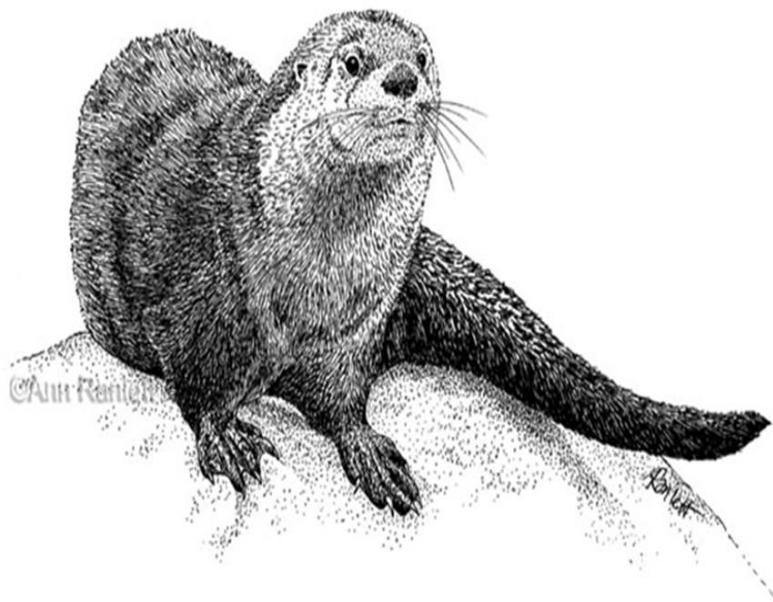
|   | Every year | Most years | Occasional years | Rarely | Never |
|---|------------|------------|------------------|--------|-------|
| % | 55.8       | 18.5       | 16.2             | 6.8    | 2.6   |

Table 22. Distribution of trappers by county of residence based on responses to the 2012-2013 Illinois Otter Trapper Survey ( $n=639$ ).

| County     | <i>n</i> | County     | <i>n</i> | County      | <i>n</i> |
|------------|----------|------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Adams      | 25       | Hardin     | 3        | Morgan      | 5        |
| Alexander  | 7        | Henderson  | 6        | Moultrie    | 3        |
| Bond       | 7        | Henry      | 9        | Ogle        | 7        |
| Boone      | 0        | Iroquois   | 8        | Peoria      | 8        |
| Brown      | 8        | Jackson    | 12       | Perry       | 6        |
| Bureau     | 5        | Jasper     | 11       | Piatt       | 0        |
| Calhoun    | 10       | Jefferson  | 8        | Pike        | 21       |
| Carroll    | 16       | Jersey     | 4        | Pope        | 3        |
| Cass       | 8        | Jo Daviess | 16       | Pulaski     | 9        |
| Champaign  | 7        | Johnson    | 9        | Putnam      | 3        |
| Christian  | 5        | Kane       | 0        | Randolph    | 9        |
| Clark      | 2        | Kankakee   | 0        | Richland    | 3        |
| Clay       | 9        | Kendall    | 0        | Rock Island | 6        |
| Clinton    | 10       | Knox       | 11       | St. Clair   | 13       |
| Coles      | 4        | Lake       | 2        | Saline      | 4        |
| Cook       | 2        | LaSalle    | 2        | Sangamon    | 4        |
| Crawford   | 4        | Lawrence   | 9        | Schuyler    | 3        |
| Cumberland | 5        | Lee        | 1        | Scott       | 2        |
| De Kalb    | 2        | Livingston | 1        | Shelby      | 6        |
| DeWitt     | 2        | Logan      | 0        | Stark       | 1        |
| Douglas    | 4        | McDonough  | 13       | Stephenson  | 11       |
| Du Page    | 1        | McHenry    | 0        | Tazewell    | 9        |
| Edgar      | 0        | McLean     | 6        | Union       | 9        |
| Edwards    | 6        | Macon      | 3        | Vermilion   | 6        |
| Effingham  | 11       | Macoupin   | 4        | Wabash      | 3        |
| Fayette    | 19       | Madison    | 9        | Warren      | 4        |
| Ford       | 6        | Marion     | 9        | Washington  | 3        |
| Franklin   | 6        | Marshall   | 0        | Wayne       | 9        |
| Fulton     | 9        | Mason      | 5        | White       | 5        |
| Gallatin   | 4        | Massac     | 6        | Whiteside   | 15       |
| Greene     | 9        | Menard     | 0        | Will        | 0        |
| Grundy     | 1        | Mercer     | 5        | Williamson  | 12       |
| Hamilton   | 2        | Monroe     | 3        | Winnebago   | 9        |
| Hancock    | 19       | Montgomery | 5        | Woodford    | 6        |
|            |          |            |          | Indiana     | 3        |
|            |          |            |          | Iowa        | 4        |

Appendix A

# Illinois Trapper Survey: 2012 - 2013 Season



Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Wildlife Resources  
and  
Illinois Natural History Survey



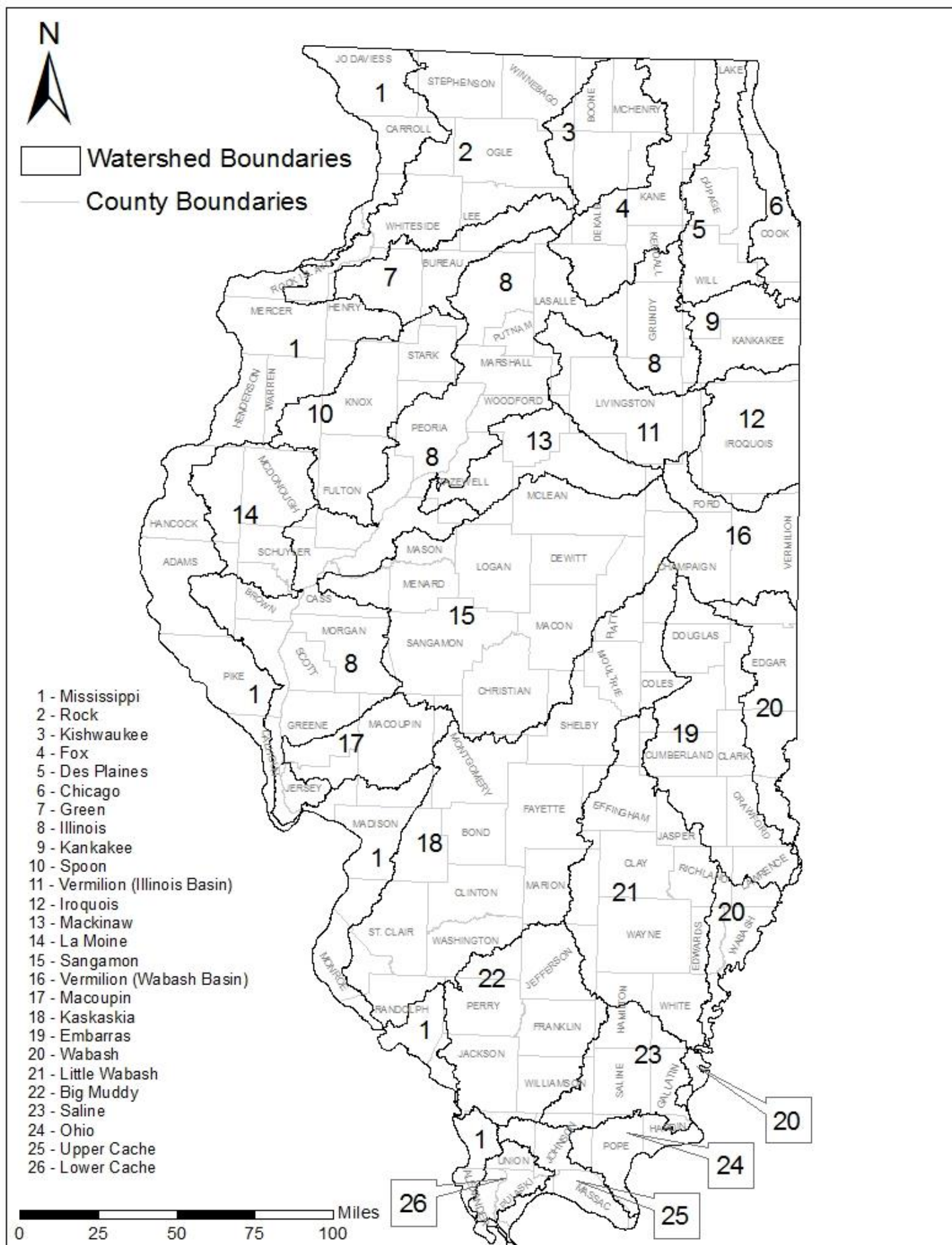
ILLINOIS  
NATURAL  
HISTORY  
SURVEY

The Department of Natural Resources is requesting disclosure of information that is necessary to accomplish the statutory purpose as outlined under the Illinois Compiled Statutes, The Wildlife Code, Chapter 520. This study is funded by the federal Wildlife Restoration Fund through your purchase of hunting arms and ammunition.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!**

All of your responses will be kept confidential.

Please return this survey in the postage-paid return envelope provided.



**Section 1. Effort and Harvest.** Please answer the following questions about your trapping activities during the 2012-2013 trapping season in Illinois.

1. Did you set any **traps** for furbearers in Illinois during the 2012-13 trapping season? *(Please check one.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ No (Please skip to **Section 4**)

2. Complete each blank for all species **trapped** in Illinois during the 2012-13 season. Report only your personal catch. If you trapped with a partner, list only your half of the catch. **DO NOT include animals taken by hunting.**

| Species  | Number Trapped | Number Sold in Illinois | Number Sold or Shipped Out of State | Number Not Sold |
|----------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Muskrat  | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Mink     | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Otter    | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Raccoon  | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Opossum  | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Red Fox  | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Gray Fox | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Beaver   | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Skunk    | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Weasel   | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Coyote   | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |
| Badger   | _____          | _____                   | _____                               | _____           |

3. In which county did you set traps most often during the 2012-13 trapping season?

\_\_\_\_\_ County

4. How many days (or nights) did you set traps during the 2012-13 trapping season?

\_\_\_\_\_ days (or nights)

5. What was the average number of traps you set on your trapline during the 2012-13 trapping season?

\_\_\_\_\_ traps

**Section 2. Otter Trapping.** 2012-2013 was the first year in modern times it was legal to trap otters in Illinois. To better manage otters in the state, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources requests information on otter trapping. Please answer the following questions about your otter trapping activities during the 2012-2013 season.

1. Please provide the number of otters you captured \_\_\_\_\_ otters
2. Please provide the number of otters trapped in each of the types of sets listed below.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ targeted otter  
 \_\_\_\_\_ targeted raccoon, with otter as a secondary target  
 \_\_\_\_\_ targeted beaver, with otter as a secondary target
3. It is important for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to understand the distribution of the otter harvest in the state. Please refer to the **map provided** on the **inside cover of this questionnaire** and in the table below please write the name of the watershed where you trapped otters and the number of otters trapped in each watershed selected.

| Watershed Name | Otters Harvested |         |
|----------------|------------------|---------|
|                | Males            | Females |
|                |                  |         |
|                |                  |         |
|                |                  |         |
|                |                  |         |

4. Please give your satisfaction with the length of time it took to receive your CITES tag by circling the number below that matches your response.

|                      |                    |                      |                |                     |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Not at all Satisfied | Slightly Satisfied | Moderately Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Extremely Satisfied |
| 1                    | 2                  | 3                    | 4              | 5                   |

**Section 3. Wildlife Sightings.** The furbearer species addressed in the following questions are of special conservation concern to Illinois wildlife biologists. Information you provide in the following questions will help us to manage Illinois wildlife to ensure healthy populations.

1. Did you see any bobcats in Illinois during the 2012-13 trapping season? *(Please check one.)*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ No (Please skip to **Question 3**)
2. If you did see bobcats in Illinois during the 2012-13 trapping season, in which county(ies) were they seen? *(Please indicate.)*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ County(ies)
3. Did you see bobcat sign in Illinois during the 2012-13 trapping season? *(Please check one.)*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ No (Please skip to **Section 3**)
4. If you did see bobcat sign in Illinois during the 2012-13 trapping season, in which county(ies) was it seen? *(Please indicate.)*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ County(ies)



**Section 4. Attitudes Toward Trapping.** Please state if you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling the number that matches your response.

|   | Strongly<br>Disagree | Disagree | Somewhat<br>Disagree | Unsure | Somewhat<br>Agree | Agree | Strongly<br>Agree |
|---|----------------------|----------|----------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Trapping is one of the most important activities in my life.                                  | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| I spend a lot of time in the off-season planning for trapping season.                         | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| Trapping provides me with a source of income.   | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| I plan vacation time around trapping season.  | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| Trapping gives me a sense of independence.  | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| Sharing trapping traditions with others is important.   | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| Trapping is an important part of my lifestyle.  | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| Trapping is a test of outdoor skill and knowledge.  | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| My closest friends are trappers.  | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| I spend a lot of time before the season scouting the area I will trap.                        | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| I enjoy introducing new people to trapping.   | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| Interacting with other trappers (fur sales, meetings, etc.) is an important part of trapping. | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| I trap for the challenge it provides.   | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| Trapping is an important tradition.   | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| I trap for the extra income it provides.  | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| Trapping maintains family traditions.   | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |
| To be self-reliant  | 1                    | 2        | 3                    | 4      | 5                 | 6     | 7                 |

**Section 5. Information about you.** The following questions provide important information to help us understand more about the people who trap in Illinois. Please tell us about yourself by completing the following questions. All responses will be kept confidential.

1. Please give your age. \_\_\_\_\_ years
2. How many years have you been trapping in Illinois? \_\_\_\_\_ years
3. Please give your gender \_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_ Female

4. What is your county of residence? \_\_\_\_\_ County

5. Was the 2012-13 trapping season your first time trapping in Illinois?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I'm a new Illinois resident trapper

\_\_\_\_\_ No, but I haven't trapped for more than a year

\_\_\_\_\_ No (Please go to question 6)

5a. Did you begin or return to trapping during the 2012-2013 season because it was now legal to trap otters?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

6. Which of the following best describes how often you trap furbearers in Illinois?

\_\_\_\_\_ Every year

\_\_\_\_\_ Most years

\_\_\_\_\_ Occasional years

\_\_\_\_\_ Rarely

\_\_\_\_\_ Never

### Comments



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!**  
**Please return this survey in the postage-paid envelope provided.**

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives federal assistance and therefore must comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the U.S. Constitution, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62701-1787, (217) 782-7616 or the Officer of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Appendix B**ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY**

Prairie Research Institute  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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May 10, 2013

Dear Illinois Trapper,

You are one of a select group of Illinois trappers asked to provide information about your trapping activities in Illinois. Please complete and return the enclosed questionnaire about your trapping harvest and activities in Illinois during the 2012-2013 trapping season.

The information you and other selected trappers furnish our biologists is vital for proper furbearer management and allows us to safeguard furbearer populations while maximizing trapping opportunities. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the postage paid envelope provided.

You may access the results of this and other studies of hunters and hunting in Illinois at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/programs/hd/>. You may also find information about Illinois Department of Natural Resources wildlife management programs and wildlife in Illinois at <http://dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildliferesources/>.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller  
Human Dimensions Research Program

Appendix C

Dear Illinois Trapper,

Recently you were mailed a questionnaire about your trapping activities in Illinois. We have not yet received your response. **If you have already returned the questionnaire, we thank you. If you have not returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. Your input is very important!**

Your name and address will be deleted from our mailing list when your questionnaire is received. Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix D

## ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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June 14, 2013

Dear Illinois Trapper,

You recently received a survey questionnaire requesting information about your trapping activities during the 2012-2013 trapping seasons. We have not received your completed survey questionnaire at this time. If you recently returned your questionnaire, we thank you. If not, we have enclosed a second one for you. Please take a few moments of your time to complete this questionnaire **even if you were not successful or did not trap during the 2012-2013 trapping seasons.**

**The information you and other selected trappers furnish our biologists is vital for proper furbearer management and allows us to safeguard furbearer populations while maximizing trapping opportunities.**

Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the postage paid envelope provided.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,  


Craig A. Miller  
Human Dimensions Research Program

## Appendix E

### 2012-2013 Season Dates and Limits Information *(continued)*

| Furbearers—Hunting | SPECIES                  | DATES (INCLUSIVE) AND ZONES   | HOURS  | LIMIT    |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---|--|----------|
|                    | Raccoon and Opossum      | Nov. 5, 2012-Feb. 10, 2013 (North)<br>Nov. 10, 2012-Feb. 15, 2013 (South)<br>Closed Nov. 16-17 and through 6 p.m. Nov. 18 and closed<br>Nov. 29-Dec. 1 and through 6 p.m. Dec. 2 in counties open for<br>firearm deer hunting | Unrestricted except<br>Nov. 5 (North) and<br>Nov. 10 (South)<br>opens at sunrise <sup>d</sup>                    | No Limit |
|                    | Fox (Red and Gray)       | Nov. 10, 2012-Jan. 31, 2013 (Statewide)<br>Closed Nov. 16-17 and through 6 p.m. Nov. 18 and closed Nov. 29-Dec. 1<br>and through 6 p.m. Dec. 2 in counties open for firearm deer hunting                                      | Unrestricted<br>except Nov. 10<br>opens at sunrise <sup>d</sup>  |          |
|                    | Coyote and Striped Skunk | Year round (Statewide)<br>Closed Nov. 16-17 and through 6 p.m. Nov. 18 and closed Nov. 29-Dec. 1<br>and through 6 p.m. Dec. 2 in counties open for firearm deer hunting <sup>e</sup>  | 1/2 hour before sunrise<br>to 1/2 hr. after sunset;<br>open 24 hours Nov. 10,<br>2012-Feb. 15, 2013 <sup>f</sup> |          |

| Furbearers—Trapping | SPECIES  | DATES (INCLUSIVE) AND ZONES   | LIMIT   | SPECIAL REGULATIONS (SEE PP-PP FOR DETAILS AND ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS)  |
|---------------------|--|---|---|--|
|                     | Raccoon, Opossum, Skunk, Weasel, Mink, Muskrat, Fox (Red and Gray), Coyote, Badger | Nov. 5, 2012-Jan. 20, 2013 (North)<br>Nov. 10, 2012-Jan. 25, 2013 (South)   | None except for badger, which is limited to 2 per person per season in north zone and 1 per person per season in south zone |  |
|                     | Woodchuck (Groundhog)  | June 1-Sept. 30, 2012 (Statewide)   | None  |  |
|                     | Beaver   | Nov. 5, 2012-March 31, 2013 (North)<br>Nov. 10, 2012-March 31, 2013 (South) |   |  |
|                     | River Otter  | Nov. 5, 2012-March 31, 2013 (North)<br>Nov. 10, 2012-March 31, 2013 (South) | 5 per person per season (statewide)   | Must purchase Otter Registration Permit within 48 hours after each otter is trapped. Must affix official CITES tag to each pelt. |
|                     | Extended Spring Season for Mink and Muskrat  | Jan. 20, 2013-Feb. 15, 2013 (North)<br>Jan. 25, 2013-Feb. 15, 2013 (South)  | None  | No foothold traps may be set for mink or muskrat. Body-gripping (killer) traps must be completely submerged underwater.          |

<sup>a</sup> On the 2nd day of the hunting season, you may possess no more than twice the daily bag limit.

<sup>b</sup> South — 1st season—April 8-12; 2nd season—April 13-18; 3rd season—April 19-24; 4th season—April 25-May 1; 5th season—May 2-9

North — 1st season—April 15-19; 2nd season—April 20-25; 3rd season—April 26-May 1; 4th season—May 2-8; 5th season—May 9-16

<sup>c</sup> The daily bag and possession limits include mourning doves and white-winged doves in the aggregate. There is no bag limit on Eurasian-collared doves and ringed turtle doves, but they may be taken only during the established season dates and hours and using only legal methods for mourning doves. Hunters may not remain in the field for the purpose of taking Eurasian-collared doves or ringed turtle doves after they reach their daily bag limit for mourning/white-winged doves.

<sup>d</sup> During the Archery Deer Season bow hunting hours for coyote, striped skunk, raccoon, opossum, red fox and gray fox will be 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

<sup>e</sup> Hunters with unfilled firearm deer permits may take coyotes during firearm deer season by shotgun with slugs, muzzleloader or handgun from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

<sup>f</sup> No hunter, regardless of the quantity or type of permits in his/her possession, may harvest more than two antlered deer during a year, including the archery, muzzleloader and youth firearm seasons. For the purpose of this bag limit, deer seasons are considered to be in the same year if their opening dates are within the same 12-month period that begins July 1.

<sup>g</sup> Antlered deer bag limit does not apply to this season.



## Appendix F

